PROPOSITIONS

Concerning

CHVRCH-GOVERMENT

AND

ORDINATION

OF

MINISTERS.

EDENBURGH:
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ORDINATION;

AND

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

IN

PRESBYTERIA

24988

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE LORDS and COMMONS Assembled in PARLIAMENT:

The humble advice of the Assembly of Divines, now sitting by Ordinance of Parliament at WESTMINSTER, Concerning *CHURCH GOVERNMENT.*

The Preface.

JEsus Christ upon whose shoulders the Government is, whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, of the encrease of whose Government and Peace there shal be no end, who sits upon the throne of *David*, and upon his Kingdom to order it, and to establish it with Judgment and Justice, from henceforth even for ever, having all power given unto him in Heaven and in Earth by the Father, who raised him from the dead and set him on his own Right Hand, far above all Principalities and Power, and Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come, and put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things, to the Church which is his Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all; He being ascended up far above all Heavens, that he might fill all things, received gifts for his Church, and gave offices necessary for the edification of his Church, and perfecting of his Saints.

Isa. 9. 6, 7.

Mat. 28. 18 19, 20. Eph. 1. 20. 21, 22, 23. Compared with Eph. 4. 8. 11. and Psa. 68. 18.

Of the Church.

THere is one General Church visible held forth in the New Testament, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12,13,28. together with the rest of the Chapter.

The Ministry, Oracles, and Ordinances of the New Testament, are given by Jesus Christ to the General Church visible, for the gathering and perfecting of it in this life until his second coming, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *Eph.* 4. 4,5. compared with *vers.* 10, 11, 12, 13. 15,16. of the same Chapter.

Particular visible Churches, Members of the General Church are also held forth in the new Testament, *Gal.* 1. 21, 22. *Rev.* 1. 4. 20. and *Rev.* 2. 1. Particular Churches in the Primitive times were made up of visible Saints, *viz.* Of such as being of age professed faith in Christ, and obedience unto Christ, according to the Rule of Faith and Life taught by Christ and his Apostles; And of their Children, *Acts* 2. 38,41. *Acts* 2. *vers.* last, compared with *Acts* 5.14. 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. compared with the 2 *Cor.* 9.13. *Acts* 2.39. 1 *Cor.* 7.14. *Rom.* 11.16. and so forward, *Mark* 10. 14. compared with *Math.* 19.13,14. *Luke* 18.15,16.

Of the Officers of the Church.

THe Officers which Christ hath appointed for the edification of his Church, and the perfecting of the Saints, are,

Some extraordinary, as Apostles, Evangelists and Prophets, which are ceased.

Others ordinary and perpetual, as Pastors, Teachers, and other Church Governors and Deacons.

Pastors.

THe Pastor is an ordinary and perpetual Officer in the Church, *Jer.* 3.15,16,17. Prophecying of the time of the Gospel, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2,3,4. *Eph.* 4. 11,12,13.

First, It belongs to his office;

To pray for and with his flock as the mouth of the people unto God, *Acts* 6. 2,3,4. *Acts* 20. 36. Where Preaching and Prayer

are

are joyned as ſeveral parts of the ſame Office, *James* 5. 14,15. The Office of the Elder, that is the Paſtor, is to pray for the ſick, even in private, to which a bleſſing is eſpecially promiſed, much more therefore ought he to perform this in the publick execution of his Office as a part thereof, 1 *Cor.*14. *verſ.* 15,16.

To read the Scripture publickly, for the proof of which;

1. That the Prieſts and Levites in the Jewiſh Church, were truſted with the publick reading of the Word, as is proved, *Deut.* 31. 9,10,11. *Neh.*8.1,2, and 13.

2. That the Miniſters of the Goſpel have as ample a Charge and Commiſſion to diſpence the Word as wel as other Ordinances, as the Prieſts and Levites had under the Law proved, *Iſa.* 66. 21. *Mat.* 23. 34. where our Saviour intituleth the Officers of the New Teſtament whom he wil ſend forth by the ſame names of the teachers of the Old.

Which Propoſitions prove, that therefore (the duty being of a Moral nature) it followeth by juſt conſequence, that the publick reading of the Scriptures belongeth to the Paſtors Office.

To feed the Flock by Preaching of the Word according to which he is to teach, convince, reprove, exhort and comfort, 1 *Tim.*3. 2. 2 *Tim.* 3.16,17. *Tit.*1.9.

To Catechiſe, which is a plain laying down the principles of the Oracles of God, *Heb.* 5.12. or of the Doctrine of Ghriſt, and is a part of Preaching.

To diſpence other divine myſteries, 1 *Cor.* 4-1,2.

To adminiſter the Sacraments, *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. *Mark* 16. 15. 16. 1 *Cor.*11.23,24,25. compared with 1 *Cor.*10.16.

To bleſs the People from God, *Numb.* 6. 23,24,25,26. compared with *Rev.*14.5. (where the ſame bleſſings and Perſons from whom they come are expreſly mentioned) *Iſa.*66.21. Where under the names of Prieſts and Levites to be continued under the Goſpel, are meant Evangelical Paſtors, who therefore are by Office to bleſs the People, *Deut.*10.8. 2 *Cor.*13.14. *Eph.*1.2.

To take care of the poor, *Acts* 11. 30. *Acts* 4. 34, 35, 36, 37. *Acts* 6.2,3,4. 1 *Cor.* 16. 1,2,3,4. *Gal.* 2.9,10.

And he hath alſo a ruling power over the flock as a Paſtor, 1 *Tim.* 5.17. *Acts* 20.17. and 28. 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 12. *Heb.*13.7,17.

Teacher

Teacher or Doctor.

THe Scripture doth hold out the name and title of Teacher, as well as of the Paſtor, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *Epheſ.* 4. 11. Who is alſo a Miniſter of the Word as wel as the Paſtor, and hath power of adminiſtration of the Sacraments.

The Lord having given different gifts, and divers exerciſes according to theſe gifts in the Miniſtry of the Word, *Rom.* 12. 6, 7, 8. 1 *Cor.* 12. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7. Though theſe different gifts may meet in and accordingly be exerciſed by one and the ſame Miniſter, 1 *Cor.* 14. 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. *Tit.* 1. 9. yet where be ſeveral Miniſters in the ſame Congregation, they may be deſigned to ſeveral imployments, according to the different gifts in which each of them doth moſt excel, *Rom.* 12. 6, 7, 8. 1 *Pet.* 4. 10, 11. and he that doth more excel in expoſition of Scripture, in teaching ſound Doctrine, and in convincing gain-ſayers, than he doth in application, and is accordingly imployed therein, may be called a Teacher, or Doctor (the places alledged by the Notation of the Word doth prove the Propoſition) Nevertheleſs, where is but one Miniſter in a particular Congregation, he is to perform, ſo far as he is able, the whole work of the Miniſtry, as appeareth in the 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. *Tit.* 1. 9. before alledged, 1 *Tim.* 6. 2.

A Teacher or Doctor is of moſt excellent uſe in Schools, and Univerſities, as of old in the Schools of the Prophets, and at Jeruſalem, where *Gamaliel* and others taught as Doctors.

Other Church Governors.

AS there were in the Jewiſh Church, Elders of the people joyned with the Prieſts and Levites in the Government of the Church (as appeareth in the 2 *Chro.* 19. 8, 9, 10.) So Chriſt, who hath inſtituted a Government, and Governors Eccleſiaſtical in the Church, hath furniſhed ſome in his Church, beſide the Miniſters of the Word, with gifts for Government, and with commiſſion to execute the ſame when called thereunto, who are to joyn with the Miniſter in the Government of the Church, *Rom.* 12. 7, 8. 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. which Officers, Reformed Churches commonly cal Elders.

Deacons

Deacons.

The Scripture doth hold out Deacons as distinct Officers in the Church, *Phil.* 1.1. 1 *Tim.* 3.8. Whose office is perpetual, 1 *Tim.* 3.8. to *verse* 15. *Acts* 6.1,2,3,4. To whose office it belongs not to preach the Word or administer the Sacraments, but to take special care in distributing to the necessities of the poor, *Acts* 6.1,2,3,4. and the verses following.

Of particular Congregations.

IT is lawful and expedient that there be fixed Congregations, that is, a certain company of Christians to meet in one Assembly ordinarily for publike worship. When Believers multiply to such a number that they cannot conveniently meet in one place; It is lawful and expedient that they should be divided into distinct and fixed Congregations, for the better administration of such Ordinances as belong unto them, and the discharge of mutual duties, 1 *Cor.* 14. *verſ.* 26. *Let all things be done unto edifying*, and *verſes* 33. and 40.

The ordinary way of dividing Christians into distinct Congregations, and most expedient for edification, is by the respective bounds of their dwellings. Deu. 15.7,

First, Because they who dwel together, being bound to all kind of moral duties one to another, have the better opportunity thereby to discharge them; which moral tye is perpetual, for Christ came not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it. 11. Mat. 22. 39. Mat 5.17.

Secondly, The Communion of Saints must be so ordered as may stand with the most convenient use of the ordinances, and discharge of Moral duties without respect of Persons, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. *Let all things be done unto edifying.* Heb. 10. 24, 25. Jam. 2.1,2.

Thirdly. The Pastor and People must so nearly co-habite together, as that they may mutually performe their duties each to other with most convenience.

In this company some must be set apart to their Office.

Of

Of the Officers of a particular Congregation.

FOr Officers in a ſingle Congregation, there ought to be one at the leaſt, both to labour in the Word and Doctrine, and to Rule, *Prov.*29.18. 1 *Tim.*5.17. *Heb.*13.7.

It is alſo requiſite, that there ſhould be others to joyn in Government, 1 *Cor.*12.28.

And likewiſe it is requiſite, that there be others to take ſpecial care for the relief of the poor, *Acts* 6.2, 3.

The number of each of which is to be proportioned according to the condition of the Congregation.

Theſe Officers are to meet together at convenient and ſet times, for the wel ordering of the affairs of that Congregation, each according to his Office.

It is moſt expedient that in theſe meetings, one whoſe Office is to labour in the Word and Doctrine, do moderate in their proceedings, 1 *Tim.*5.17.

Of the ordinance in a particular Congregation.

THe ordinances in a ſingle Congregation, are Prayer, Thankſgiving, and ſinging of Pſalms, 1 *Tim.*2. *verſ.*1. 1 *Cor.*14.15, 16. The word read (although there follow no immediate explication of what is read) the Word expounded and applyed, Catechiſing, the Sacraments adminiſtred, Collection made for the poor, diſmiſſing the people with a bleſſing.

Of Church Government, and the ſeveral ſorts of Aſſemblies for the ſame.

CHriſt hath inſtituted a Government, and Governors Eccleſiaſtical in the Church, to that purpoſe the Apoſtles did immediatly receive the keys from the hand of Jeſus Chriſt, and did uſe & exerciſe them in all the Churches of the world upon all occaſions.

And Chriſt hath ſince continually furniſhed ſome in his Church with gifts of Government, and with commiſsion to execute the ſame when called thereunto.

It is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that the Church be

be governed by ſeveral ſorts of Aſſemblies, which are Congregational, Claſsical, and Synodical.

Of the power in Common of all theſe Aſſemblies.

IT is lawfull and agreeable to the word of God, that the ſeverall Aſſemblies before mentioned have power to convent and call before them any perſon within their ſeveral bounds, whom the Eccleſiaſtical buſineſs which is before them doth concern, proved by *Mat.* Chap. 18.

They have power to hear and determine ſuch cauſes and differences as do orderly come before them.

It is lawfull and agreeable to the Word of God, that all the ſaid Aſſemblies have ſome power to diſpence Church cenſures.

Of Congregational Aſſemblies, that is, The meeting of the ruling Officers of a particular Congregation for the Government thereof.

THe ruling Officers of a particular Congregation have power authoritatively, to call before them any member of the Congregation as they ſhal ſee juſt occaſion.

To enquire into the knowledg and ſpirituall eſtate of the ſeverall members of the Congregation.

To admoniſh and rebuke.

Which three branches are proved by *Heb.*13.17. 1 *Theſ.*5.12,13. *Ezek.*34.4.

Authoritative ſuſpenſion from the Lords Table, of a Perſon not yet caſt out of the Church, is agreeable to the Scripture.

Firſt, Becauſe the Ordinance it ſelf muſt not be prophaned.

Secondly, Becauſe we are charged to withdraw from theſe that walk diſorderly.

Thirdly, Becauſe of the great ſin and danger, both to him that comes unworthily, and alſo to the whole Church, *Mat.*7.6. 2 *Theſ.*3.6,14,15. 1 *Cor.*11.27. to the end of the *Chap.* compared with *Jude*, *verſ.* 23. 1 *Tim.*5.22. And there was power and authority under the Old Teſtament, to keep unclean perſons from holy things, *Levit.*13.5. *Numb.*9.7. 2 *Chron.*23.19.

The like Power and Authority, by way of Analogie, continues under the New Teſtament.

The Ruling Officers of a particular Congregation, have power Authoritatively to ſuſpend from the Lords Table a Perſon not yet caſt out of the Church.

Firſt, Becauſe thoſe who have Authority to judg of, and admit ſuch as are fit to receive the Sacrament, have Authority to keep back ſuch as ſhal be found unworthy.

Secondly, Becauſe it is an Eccleſiaſtical buſineſs of ordinary practiſe belonging to that Congregation.

When Congregations are divided and fixed, they need all mutual help one from another, both in regard of their intrinſecal weakneſſes and mutual dependence; As alſo, in regard of enemies from without.

Of Claſſical Aſſemblies.

THe Scripture doth hold out a Presbytery in a Church, both in the firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, *Chap.* 4. *verſ.* 14. And in *Acts* 15. *verſes* 2.4,6.

A Presbytery conſiſteth of Miniſters of the Word, and ſuch other publike Officers as are agreeable to, and warranted by the Word of God, to be Church Governours, to joyn with the Miniſters in the Government of the Church, as appeareth, *Rom.* 12.7,8. 1 *Cor.* 12.28.

The Scripture doth hold forth, that many particular Congregations may be under one Presbyterial Government.

This propoſition is proved by inſtances.

I. Firſt, Of the Church of *Jeruſalem*, which conſiſteth of more Congregations then one, and all theſe Congregations were under one Presbyterial Government.

This appeareth thus.

1. Firſt, The Church of *Jeruſalem* conſiſteth of more Congregations then one, as is manifeſt, firſt:

By the multitude of Believers mentioned in divers,

Both before the diſperſion of the Believers there by means of the perſecution (mentioned in the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, *Chap.* 8. in the beginning thereof) witneſs, *Chap.* 1. *verſ.* 11. *Chap.* 2. *verſ.* 41. 46. and 47. *Chap.* 4. 4. *Chap.* 5. 14. *Chap.* 6. of the ſame Book of the *Acts*, *verſes* 1.7.

And alſo after the diſperſion, *Acts* 9. 31. *Chap.* 12. 24. and

Chap.

Chap. 21. *verſe* 20. of the ſame Book.

Secondly, By the many Apoſtles and other Preachers in the Church of *Jeruſalem*: And if there were but one Congregation there, then each Apoſtle Preached but ſeldom; which will not conſiſt with *Chap.* 6. *verſe* 2. of the ſame Book of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles.

Thirdly, The diverſity of languages amongſt the Believers, mentioned both in the ſecond and ſixth Chapters of the *Acts*, doth argue more Congregations then one in that Church.

Secondly, All thoſe Congregations were under one Presbyterial Government, becauſe: Firſt, They were one Church, *Acts* 8.1. and *Chap.* 2.47. compared with *Chapter* 5.11. *Chap.* 12.5. and *Chap.*15.4. of the ſame Book. 2.

Secondly, The Elders of the Church are mentioned, *Acts* 11.30. *Chap.*15.4,6,22. and *Chapter* 21.17,18. of the ſame Book.

Thirdly, The Apoſtles did the ordinary Acts of Presbyters, as Presbyters in that Kirk, which proveth a Presbyterial Church before the diſperſion, *Acts* 6.

Fourthly, The ſeveral Congregations in *Jeruſalem* being one Church, the Elders of that Church are mentioned as meeting together for acts of Government, *Acts* 11.30. *Acts* 15.4,6,22. and *Chap.* 21.17.18. and ſo forward, which proves that thoſe ſeverall Congregations were under one Presbyteriall Government.

And whether theſe Congregations were fixed or not fixed, in regard of Officers or Members, it is all one as to the truth of the Propoſition.

Nor doth there appear any material difference betwixt the ſeveral Congregations in *Jeruſalem*, and the many Congregations now in the ordinary condition of the Church, as to the point of fixedneſs required of Officers or Members.

Thirdly, Therefore the Scripture doth hold forth, that many Congregations may be under one Presbyteriall Government. 3.

Secondly, By the inſtance of the Church of *Epheſus*, for, II.

1. That they were more Congregations then one in the Church of *Epheſus*, appears by *Acts* 20.31. where is mention of *Pauls* continuance at *Epheſus* in Preaching for the ſpace of three years, and *Acts* 19.18,19,20. where the ſpecial effect of the Word is menti-

oned, and *verſ.* 10, and 17, of the ſame *Chapter*, where is a diſtinction of *Jews* and *Greeks*, and 1 *Cor.* 16. 8. and 9. where a reaſon of *Pauls* ſtay at *Epheſus* untill *Pentecoſt*, and *verſ.* 19. where is mention of a particular Church in the houſe of *Aquila* and *Priſcilla* then at *Epheſus*, as appears, *Acts* 18. 19, 24, 26. all which laid together doth prove, that the multitudes of Believers did make more Congregations then one in the Church of *Epheſus*.

2. That there were many Elders over theſe many Congregations, as one Flock; appeareth, *Acts* 20. 17, 25, 28, 30, 36, 37.

3. That theſe many Congregations were one Church, and that they were under one Presbyteriall Government, appeareth, *Rev.* 2. the firſt ſix *verſes*, joyned with *Acts* 20. *verſe* 17. 18.

Of Synodicall Aſſemblies.

THe Scripture doth hold out another ſort of Aſſemblies for the Government of the Church, beſide Caſſical and Congregational, all which we call Synodical, *Acts* 15. Paſtors and Teachers, and other Church Governors (as alſo other fit perſons, when it ſhal be deemed expedient) are members of thoſe Aſſemblies which we call Synodicall, where they have a lawfull calling thereunto.

Synodical Aſſemblies may lawfully be of ſeveral ſorts, as Provincial, National, and Oecumenical.

It is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that there be a ſubordination of Congregational, Caſſical, Provincial, and National Aſſemblies for the Government of the Church.

Of Ordination of Miniſters.

UNder the head of Ordination of Miniſters is to be conſidered, either the Doctrine of Ordination, or the Power of it.

Touching

Touching the Doctrine of ORDINATION.

NO man ought to take upon him the office of a Minister of the Word without a lawful calling, *John* 3.27. *Rom.* 10,14,15. *Jer.* 14. 14. *Heb.* 5.4.

Ordination is always to be continued in the Church, *Tit.* 1. 5. 1 *Tim.* 5.21,22.

Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some publick Church office, *Numb.* 8.10,11,14,19,22. *Acts* 6.3,5,6.

Every Minister of the Word is to be ordained by imposition of hands, and Prayer with Fasting, by those Preaching Presbyters to whom it doth belong, 1 *Tim.* 5.22. *Acts* 14.23. *Acts* 13. 3.

It is agreeable to the Word of God and very expedient, that such as are to be ordained Ministers, be designed to some particular Church or other Ministerial charge, *Acts* 14. 23. *Tit.* 1.5. *Acts* 20.17. and 28.

He that is to be ordained Minister, must be duly qualified both for life and Ministerial abilities, according to the rules of the Apostle, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2,3,4,5,6. and *Tit.* 1. 5,6,7,8,9.

He is to be examined and approved by those by whom he is to be ordained, 1 *Tim.* 3. *v.* 7. and 10. and *Chap.* 5. *v.* 22.

No man is to be ordained a Minister for a particular Congregation, if they of that Congregation can shew just cause of exception against him, 1 *Tim.* 3.2. *Tit.* 1. 7.

Touching the Power of ORDINATION.

ORdination is the act of a Presbytery, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14.

The power of ordering the whole work of Ordination, is in the whole Presbytery, which, when it is over more Congregations then one, whether those Congregations be fixed or not fixed, in regard of Officers or Members, it is indifferent as to the point of Ordination, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14.

It is very requisite that no single Congregation that can conveniently associate, do assume to it self all and sole power in Ordination.

1. Because there is no example in Scripture, that any single Congregation which might conveniently associate, did assume to it self all and sole power in Ordination, neither is there any rule which

may warrant such a practice.

2. Because there is in Scripture example of an Ordination in a Presbytery over divers Congregations; As in the Church of *Jerusalem*, where were many Congregations, these many Congregations, were under one Presbytery, and this Presbytery did ordain.

The Preaching Presbyters orderly associated either in Cities or neighbouring Villages, are those to whom the imposition of Hands doth appertain for those Congregations within their bounds respectively.

Some other particulars concerning Church Government, do yet remain unfinished, which shal be, with all convenient speed, prepared and presented to this Honorable House.

TO

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

THE

LORDS and COMMONS

Assembled in

PARLIAMENT,

The humble advice of the Assembly of Divines, now sitting at

WESTMINSTER,

Concerning the Doctrinal part of Ordination of *MINISTERS.*

1. NO man ought to take upon him the office of a Minister of the Word without a lawful calling; *John* 3.27. *Rom.* 10,14,15. *Jer.* 14. 14. *Heb.* 5.4.

2. Ordination is alwaies to be continued in the Church, *Tit.* 1. 5. 1 *Tim.* 5.21,22.

3. Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some publick Church office, *Numb.* 8.10,11,14,19,22. *Acts* 6.3,5,6.

Every

Every Minister of the Word is to be ordained by imposition of hands, and Prayer with Fasting, by these Preaching Presbyters to whom it doth belong, 1 *Tim.*5.22. *Acts* 14.23. *Acts* 13. 3. 4.

The power of ordering the whole work of Ordination, is in the whole Presbytery, which, when it is over more Congregations then one, whether those Congregations be fixed or not fixed, in regard of Officers or Members, it is indifferent as to the point of Ordination, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. 5.

It is agreeable to the Word of God, and very expedient, that such as are to be ordained Ministers, be designed to some particular Church or other Ministerial charge, *Acts* 14. 23. *Tit.* 1.5. *Acts* 20.17. and 28. 6.

He that is to be ordained Minister, must be duly qualified both for life and Ministerial abilities, according to the rules of the Apostle, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2,3,4,5,6. and *Tit.* 1.5,6,7,8,9. 7.

He is to be examined and approved of by those by whom he is to be ordained, 1 *Tim.*3.7. 10. 1 *Tim.*5.22. 8.

No man is to be ordained a Minister for a particular Congregation, if they of that Congregation can shew just cause of exception against him, 1 *Tim.*3.2. *Tit.* 1. 7. 9.

Preaching Presbyters orderly associated either in Cities or Neighbouring Villages, are those to whom the imposition of hands doth appertain, for these Congregations within their bounds respectively, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. 10.

In extraordinary cases, something extraordinary may be done, until a setled order may be had, yet keeping as neer as possible may be to the Rule, 2 *Chro.*29.34,35,36. 2 *Chro.*30.2,3,4,5. 11.

There is at this time (as we humbly conceive) an extraordinary occasion for a way of Ordination for the present supply of Ministers. 12.

The Directory for Ordination of Ministers.

IT being manifest by the Word of God, that no man ought to take upon him the Office of a Minister of the Gospel, until he be lawfully called and ordained thereunto: And that the work of Ordination is to be performed with all due care, wisdom, gravity, and solemnity, we humbly tender these Directions as requisite to be observed.

First,

First, He that is to be ordained being either nominated by the People, or otherwise commended to the Presbytery for any place, must addreſs himself to the Presbytery, and bring with him a Teſtimonial of his taking the Covenant of the three Kingdoms, of his diligence and proficiency in his Studies; What degrees he hath taken in the Univerſity, and what hath been the time of his abode there; and withal of his age, which is to be twenty four years, but eſpecially of his life and converſation.

Which being conſidered by the Presbytery, they are to proceed, to enquire touching the Grace of God in him, and whether he be of ſuch holineſs of life as is requiſite in a Miniſter of the Goſpel, and to examine him touching his learning and ſufficiency, and touching the evidences of his calling to the holy Miniſtry, and in particular, his fair and direct calling to that place.

The Rules for Examination are theſe.

1, *That the party examined be dealt withal in a Brotherly way, with mildneſs of ſpirit, and with ſpecial reſpect to the gravity, modeſty, and quality of every one.*

2. *He ſhal be examined touching his skill in the Original tongues, and his tryal to be made by reading the* Hebrew *and* Greek *Teſtaments, and rendring ſome portion of ſome into* Latine; *And if he be defective in them, enquiry ſhal be made the more ſtrictly after his other learning, And whether he hath skil in* Logick *and* Philoſophy.

3. *What Authors in* Divinity *he hath read, and is beſt acquainted with; And tryal ſhal be made in his knowledg of the grounds of Religion, and ability to defend the Orthodox Doctrine contained in them, againſt all unſound and erroneous opinions, eſpecially theſe of the preſent age: of his skil in the ſenſe and meaning of ſuch places of Scripture as ſhalbe propoſed unto him, in caſes of Conſcience, and in the Chronology of the Scripture, and the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory.*

4. *If he hath not before preached in publick, with approbation of ſuch as are able to judge, he ſhal, at a competent time aſſigned him, expounded before the Preſbytery ſuch a place of Scripture as ſhal be given him.*

5. *He ſhal alſo within a competent time, frame a diſcourſe in Latine upon ſuch a Common place or Controverſie in Divinity as ſhal be aſſigned him, and exhibite to the Preſbytery ſuch Theſes*

as

to expreſs the ſum thereof, and maintain a Diſpute upon them.

6. He ſhal preach before the people, the Presbytery, or ſome of the Miniſters of the Word appointed by them, being preſent,

7. The proportion of his gifts in relation to the place unto which he is called, ſhal be conſidered.

8. Beſide the tryal of his gifts in Preaching, he ſhal undergo an examination in the premiſes two ſeveral dayes, and more, if the Presbytery ſhal judg it neceſſary.

9. And as for him that hath been formerly ordained a Miniſter, and is to be removed to another charge, he ſhal bring a Teſtimonial of his Ordination, and of his Abilities and Converſation, whereupon his fitneſs for that place ſhal be tryed by his Preahing there, (if it ſhal be judged neceſſary) by a further examination of him.

In all which he being approved, he is to be ſent to the Church where he is to ſerve, there to Preach three ſeveral days, and to converſe with the People, that they may have tryal of his Gifts for their edification, and may have time and occaſion to enquire into, and the better to know his life and converſation. 3.

In the laſt of theſe three days appointed for the tryal of his gifts in Preaching, there ſhal be ſent from the Presbytery to the Congregation, a publick intimation in writing, which ſhal be publickly read before the people; And after affixed to the Church door, to ſignifie that ſuch a day, a competent number of the Members of that Congregation nominated by themſelves, ſhal appear before the Presbytery, to give their conſent and approbation to ſuch a man to be their Miniſter, or otherwiſe to put in with all Chriſtian diſcretion and meekneſs what exceptions they have againſt him, and if upon the day appointed there be no juſt exception againſt him, but the People give their conſent, then the Presbytery ſhal proceed to Ordination. 4.

Upon the day appointed for Ordination, which is to be performed in that Church, where he that is to be ordained is to ſerve, a ſolemn Faſt ſhal be kept by the Congregation, that they may the more earneſtly joyn in Prayer, for a bleſſing upon the Ordinance of Chriſt, and the labours of his Servant for their good. The Presbytery ſhall come to the place, 5.

or at least three or four Ministers of the Word shal be sent thither from the Presbytery; Of which one appointed by the Presbytery, shal Preach to the people concerning the office and duty of Ministers of Christ, and how the people ought to receive them for their work sake.

6. After the Sermon, the Minister who hath Preached, shal in the face of the Congregation, demand of him who is now to be ordained concerning his faith in Christ Iesus, and his perswasion of the truth of the Reformed Religion according to the Scripture; His sincere intentions and ends in desiring to enter into this Calling; His diligence in Praying, Reading, Meditation, Preaching, Ministring the Sacraments, Discipline, and doing all Ministerial Duties towards his Charge: His Zeal and Faithfulness in maintaining the Truth of the Gospel, and Unity of the Church against Error and Schism; His care that himself and his Family may be unblameable and examples to the Flock; His willingness and humility in meekness of Spirit, to submit unto the admonitions of his Brethren and Discipline of the Church; And his resolution to continue in his duty against all trouble and persecution.

In all which having declared himself, professed his willingness and promised his endeavours by the help of God; The Minister likewise shal demand of the People, concerning their willingness to receive and acknowledg him as the Minister of Christ, and to obey and submit unto him, as having rule over them in the Lord, and to maintain, encourage and assist him in all the parts of his Office.

Which being mutually promised by the People, the Presbyteery or the Ministers sent from them for Ordination, shal solemnly set him apart to the Office and Work of the Ministry, by laying their hands on him, which is to be accompanied with a short Prayer or Blessing to this effect.

8. *Thankfully acknowledging the great mercy of God, in sending Jesus Christ for the Redemption of his people, and for his ascension to the right hand of God the Father, and thence pouring out his Spirit, and giving gifts to Men, Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastors, and Teachers, for the gathering and building up of his Church, and for fitting and inclining this man to this great Work, To entreat him to fit him with his holy Spirit, to give him (who in his name We thus set apart to this holy service) to fulfil the work of his*

his Ministry in all things, that he may both save himself and his people committed to his charge.

This or the like form of prayer and blessing being ended, let the Minister who preached, briefly exhort him to consider of the greatness of his Office and Work, the danger of negligence both to himself and his People, the blessing which wil accompany his faithfulness in this life, and that to come: And withall exhort the people to carry themselves to him as to their Minister in the Lord, according to their solemn promise made before; And so by prayer commending both him and his Flock to the Grace of God; after singing of a Psalm, let the Assembly be dismissed with a Blessing. 9.

If a Minister be designed to a Congregation, who hath been formerly ordained Presbyter according to the form of Ordination which hath been in the Church of England, which we hold for substance to be valide, and not to be disclaimed by any who have received it; Then there being a cautious proceeding in matters of Examination, let him be admitted without any new Ordination. 10.

And in case any Person already ordained Minister in *Scotland* or in any other Reformed Church, be designed to a Congregation in *England*, he is to bring from that Church to the Presbytery here, within which that Congregation is, a sufficient testimonial of his Ordination, of his life and conversation while he lived with them, and of the causes of his removal; And to undergo such a tryal of his fitness and sufficiency, and to have the same course held with him in other particulars, as is set down in the rule immediatly going before touching Examination and Admission. 11.

That Records be carefully kept in the several Presbyteries of the names of the Persons ordained with their testimonials, the time and place of their Ordination, of the Presbyters who did impose hands upon them, and of the charge to which they are appointed. 12.

That no Money or Gift, of what kind soever, shal be received from the Person to be ordained, or from any, on his behalf, for Ordination or ought else belonging to it, by any of the Presbytery, or any appertaining to any of them upon what pretence soever. 13.

Thus far of ordinary rules and course of Ordination in the ordinary way: That which concerns the extraordinary way requisite to be now practised, followeth.

1. In theſe preſent exigences while we cannot have any Presbyteries formed up to their whole power and work, and that many Miniſters are to be ordained for the ſervice of the Armies and Navy, and too many Congregations where there is no Miniſter at all; and where (by reaſon of the publike troubles) the people cannot either themſelves enquire out and find out one who may be a faithful Miniſter for them, or have any with ſafety ſent unto them for ſuch a ſolemn tryal as was before mentioned in the ordinary Rules, eſpecially when there can be no Presbytery near unto them, to whom they may addreſs themſelves, or which may come or ſend to them a fit man to be ordained in that Congregation, and for that people: And yet notwithſtanding, it is requiſite that Miniſters be ordained for them, by ſome; who being ſet apart themſelves for the work of the Miniſtry, have power to joyn in the ſetting apart of others, who are found fit and worthy. In thoſe caſes, until by Gods Bleſsing the aforeſaid difficulties may be in ſome good meaſure removed; let ſome godly Miniſters in or about the City of *London*, be deſigned by publike authority; who being aſſociated, may ordain Miniſters for the City, and the Vicinity, keeping as near to the ordinary Rules forementioned, as poſsible they may: And let this aſſociation be for no other intent or purpoſe, but only for the work of Ordination.

2. Let the like aſſociation be made by the ſame authority in great Towns, and the Neighbouring Pariſhes in the ſeveral Countys, which are at the preſent quiet and un-diſturbed, to do the like for the parts adjacent.

3. Let ſuch as are choſen or appointed for the ſervice of the Armies or Navie be ordained as aforeſaid, by the aſſociated Miniſters of *London*, or ſome others in the Country.

4. Let them do the like, when any man ſhal duly and lawfully be recommended to them for the Miniſtry of any Congregation, who cannot enjoy liberty to have a tryal of his parts and abilitys, and deſire the help of ſuch Miniſters ſo aſſociated, for the better furniſhing of them with ſuch a Perſon, as by them ſhal be judged fit for the ſervice of that Church and People.

A Directory for Church Government and Ordination of Miniſters; To be examined againſt the next GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The Preface.

JEſus Chriſt upon whoſe ſhoulders the Government is, whoſe name is called Wonderful, Counſellor, the Mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace, of the encreaſe of whoſe Government and Peace there ſhal be no end, who ſits upon the throne of *David*, and upon his Kingdom to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with Judgment and Juſtice, from henceforth even for ever, having all power given unto him in Heaven and in Earth by the Father, who raiſed him from the dead and ſet him on his own Right Hand, far above all Principalities and Power, and Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but alſo in that which is to come, and put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all; He being aſcended up far above all Heavens, that he might fill all things, received gifts for his Church, and gave offices neceſſary for the edification of his Church, and perfecting of his Saints.

Of the Church.

THere is one General Church viſible held forth in the New Teſtament, unto which General Church viſible, the Miniſtry, Oracles, and Ordinances of the New Teſtament, are given by Jeſus Chriſt, for the gathering and perfecting of the Saints in this life until his ſecond coming.

Particular viſible Churches, Members of the General Church are alſo held forth in the new Teſtament, which Particular Churches in the Primitive times were made up of viſible Saints, *viz.* Of ſuch as, being of age, profeſſed faith in Chriſt, and obedience unto Chriſt (according to the Rules of Faith and Life taught by him and his Apoſtles) and of their Children.

Of the Officers of the Church.

Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists were extraordinary Officers in the Church, and are ceased.

The Pastor is an ordinary and perpetual Officer in the Church; To whose Office it belongeth to pray, for and with his Flock; To read the Scripture publickly in the Congregation, which is an holy Ordinance in Gods Church, although there follow no immediate explication of what is read; To preach the Word, to be instant in season and out of season; To reprove, correct, instruct, rebuke, exhort, convince and comfort: One special way of discharging which work of Preaching, is, by a plain laying down the first principles of the Oracles of God, which is commonly called Catechising; to administer the Sacraments; in the Name of God to bless the people; To take care for the poor: And he hath also a ruling power over the Flock as a Pastor.

In the Scripture we also find the name and title of Teacher, who is a Minister of the Word, and hath power of administration of the Sacraments and Discipline, as wel as the Pastor.

The Lord having given different gifts, and divers exercises according to those gifts, in the Ministers of the Word, though these different gifts may meet in, and accordingly be exercised by one and the same Minister, yet where there be several Ministers in the same Congregation, they may be designed to several imployments, according to the different gifts where in each of them doth excel; And he who doth more excel in exposition of Scripture, in teaching sound Doctrine, and in convincing gain-sayers, then he doth in application, and is accordingly imployed therein, may be called a Teacher, or Doctor. Nevertheless, where there is but one Minister in a particular Congregatiō, he is to perform, so far as he is able, the whole work of the Ministry.

A Teacher or Doctor is of most excellent use in Schools and Universities, as of old in the Schools of the Prophets, and at Jerusalem, where *Gamaliel* and others taught as Doctors.

It is likewise agreeable to, and warranted by the Word of God, that some others, beside the Ministers of the Word, be Church Governors, to joyn with the Ministers in the Government of the Church; which Officers, Reformed Churches commonly call Elders.

These Elders ought to be such as are men of good understanding in matters of Religion, sound in the faith, prudent, discreet, grave and of unblameable conversation.

Deacons

Deacons alſo are diſtinct Officers in the Church: To whoſe office it belongs not, to preach the Word or adminiſter the Sacraments, but to take ſpecial care for the neceſſities of the poor, by collecting for, and diſtributing to them with direction of the Elderſhip, that none amongſt the people of God be conſtrained to be beggers.

The Deacons muſt be wiſe, ſober, grave, of honeſt report, and not greedy of filthy lucre.

Of Church Government, and the ſeveral ſorts of Aſſemblies for the ſame.

CHriſt hath inſtituted a Government, and Governors Eccleſiaſtical in the Church, and to that purpoſe the Apoſtles did immediatly receive the keys from the hand of Jeſus Chriſt, and did uſe & exerciſe them in all the Churches of the world upon all occaſions.

And Chriſt hath from time to time furniſhed ſome in his Church with gifts of Government, and with commiſsion to execute the ſame when called thereunto.

It is agreeable to and warranted by the Word of God, that ſome others beſide the Miniſters of the Word, be Church Governors, as was mentioned before.

It is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that the Church be governed by ſeveral ſorts of Aſſemblies; Which are Presbyteries and Synods, or Aſſemblies, Congregational, Claſſical, and Synodical.

The Scripture doth hold out a Presbytery in a Church; which Preſbytery conſiſteth of Miniſters of the Word, and thoſe other Church Officers who are to joyn with the Miniſters in the Government of the Church.

The Scripture doth hold out another ſort of Aſſemblies for the Government of the Church, beſides Claſſical and Congregational, which we call Synodical.

Of the power in Common of all theſe Aſſemblies, and the order to be obſerved in them.

IT is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that the ſeveral Aſſemblies, before mentioned, do convent and cal before them any perſon within their ſeveral bounds, whom the Eccleſiaſtical buſineſs which is before them ſhal concern, either as a party, or a witneſs, or otherwiſe, and to examine them according to the nature of the buſineſs. And that they do hear and determine ſuch cauſes and differences as ſhal orderly come before them, and accordingly diſpence Church cenſures.

It is moſt expedient that in theſe meetings, one whoſe Office is to labour in the Word and Doctrine, do moderate in their proceedings, who is to vote as wel as the reſt of the members; To begin and end every meeting with prayer; To propoſe queſtions, gather the votes, pronounce the Reſolves: But not to do any act of Government, unleſs in & joyntly with the Aſſembly whereof he is moderator.

All the members of theſe Aſſemblies reſpectively, are to attend on the appointed days of their meetings, or to ſend the reaſon of their abſence to be judged by the Aſſembly where they ought to meet.

The final reſolutions ſhal be by the Major part of the votes of thoſe members who are preſent.

Of Particular Congregations.

IT is expedient that particular Congregations be fixed, both in their Officers and Members, which are to meet in the ſame Aſſembly ordinarily for publike worſhip.

When their number is great, that they cannot conveniently meet in one place, it is expedient that they be divided according to the reſpective bounds of their dwellings into diſtinct and fixed Congregations, for the better adminiſtration of ſuch Ordinances as belong unto them, and the diſcharge of mutual duties, wherein all, according to their ſeveral place and callings, are to labour to promote what ever appertains to the power of Godlineſs, and credit of Religion, that the whole Land in the ful extent of it, may become the Kingdom of the Lord and of his Chriſt.

Parochial Congregations in this Kingdom, conſiſting of Miniſters and People, who profeſs faith in Chriſt, and obedience unto Chriſt, according to the rules of Faith and Life taught by him and his Apoſtles; and joyn together in the publick worſhip of hearing, praying, & adminiſtration of the Sacraments; are Churches truly conſtituted.

If any perſon or perſons in the Congregation, do not anſwer his, or their profeſſion, but by open ſin and wickedneſs croſs and deny it, or if there be a want of ſome Officers, or a ſinful neglect of Officers in the due execution of Diſcipline; yet this doth not make that Congregation ceaſe to be a Church, but requires that there ſhould be a ſupply of Officers which are wanting; and a careful endeavour for the Reformation of the offended Perſon or Perſons, and of negligent Officers by juſt cenſures, according to the nature of the cauſe.

Communion and Membership in Congregations thus conſtituted, notwithſtanding the forementioned defects is not unlawful. And to refuſe or renounce Membership and Church-communion, or to ſeparate from Church communion with Congregations thus conſtituted, as unlawfull to be joyned with, in regard of their conſtitution, is not warranted by the Word of God.

Separation

Separation from a Church thus constituted, where the Government is lawfull, upon an opinion that it is unlawfull, and that therefore all the godly are also bound to separate from all such Churches so constituted and governed, and to joyn themselves to another Church of another Constitution and Government, is not warranted by the word of God, but contrary to it.

To gather Churches into an independent forme of Government out of Churches of a Presbyteriall forme of Government is unlawfull, is not lawfull or warranted by the Word of God; Nor is it lawfull for any member of a Parochiall Congregation, if the Ordinances be there administred in purity, to go and seek them elsewhere ordinarily.

Of Ordinances in a particular Congregation.

ORdinances in a particular Congregation, are Prayer, Thanksgiving, singing of Psalms, reading of the Word, Preaching and Catechizing, administring the Sacraments, blessing the people in the Name of God, and collection for the Poor. As for Discipline, wee refer our selves to what wee have elsewhere expressed.

Of the Officers of a particular Congregation.

IN the Congregation there must be some who are set apart to bear Office: One at the least to labour in the Word and Doctrine, and to rule; And let others be chosen ruling Elders to joyn with him in Government.

When any ruling Elder is to be chosen, where an Eldership is constituted, let it be done by them, with the consent and approbation of the people of that Congregation, and that not for a limited time: Yet the exercise of their Office may be so ordered by the Eldership, as that their civill imployments be least hindred thereby.

Where there are many ruling Officers in a particular Congregation, let some of them more especially attend the inspection of one part, some of another, as may be most convenient; and let them at fit times visit the severall Families for their spirituall good.

Let there be also Deacons to take speciall care for the reliefe

of the poore, who are likewiſe to be choſen by the Elderſhip, with the conſent of the people of that Congregation; and the continuance of them in that Office is to determined by the Elderſhip, with the conſent of the Congregation, ſo asmay leaſt hinder their civill imployment.

Theſe Officers are to meet together at convenient and ſet times for the well ordering of the affairs of that Congregation, each according to his Office.

The number of Elders and Deacons in each Congregation, is to be proportioned according to the condition of the Congregation.

Of Congregationall Elderſhips, or Aſſemblies for Governing in a particular Congregation.

THE Congregationall Elderſhip conſiſting of the Miniſter, or Miniſters, and the other ruling Officers of that Congregation, hath power as they ſhall ſee juſt occaſion to enquire into the knowledge and ſpirituall eſtate of any member of the Congregation: To admoniſh and rebuke; To ſuſpend from the Lords table; though the perſon be not yet caſt out of the Church. All which is agreeable to the Word of God; Although the truth of converſion and regeneration be neceſſary to every worthy communicant for his own comfort and benefit, yet thoſe onely are to be by the Elderſhip excluded, or ſuſpended from the Lords Table; who are found by them to be ignorant or ſcandalous.

Where there are more fixed Miniſters then one in a Congregation, it is expedient, that they moderate by courſe in that Elderſhip.

Of Claſſicall Aſſemblies.

WHen Congregations are divided and fixed, they need all mutuall help one from another, both in regard of their intrinſicall weakneſſe, and mutuall dependance: as alſo in regard of Enemies from without.

The Scripture doth hold forth; that many particular Congregations may be under one Presbyteriall Government.

A Claſſicall Presbytery is an Aſſembly made up of Miniſters of the Word, and other ruling Officers belonging unto ſeveral Neighbouring Congregations, and doth ordinarily conſiſt of all

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the Paſtors and Teachers belonging to thoſe ſeverall Congregations ſo aſſociated, and of one of the other ruling Officers at the leaſt from every of theſe Congregations, to be ſent by their reſpective Presbyteries.

Let them meet once every Moneth, or oftner, as occaſion ſhall require, in ſuch place as they ſhall judge moſt convenient. And before they ſit about other buſineſſe, let there be a Sermon or Expoſition of Scripture made by ſome Miniſter of that Claſſis or Expectant, as they ſhall agree amongſt themſelves.

For the more orderly managing of ſuch affairs as come before them; let there be one Moderator choſen by the Claſſis at every meeting out of the Miniſters of the Word, who ſhall continue till the next meeting.

To the enabling them to performe any Claſſicall act of Government or Ordination, there ſhall be there preſent a major part at leaſt of the Miniſters of the whole Claſſis.

It belongeth unto Claſſicall Presbyteries,

To conſider of, to debate and to reſolve according to Gods Word ſuch caſes of conſcience, or other difficulties in Doctrine, as are brought unto them out of their aſſociation, according as they ſhall finde needfull for the good of the Churches.

To examine and cenſure according to the Word any erronious Doctrine, which have been either publikely or privately vented within their aſſociation, to the corrupting of the judgements of men, and to endeavour the converting and reducing of Recuſants, or any other in Errour or Schiſme.

To order all Eccleſiaſticall matters of common concernment within the bounds of their aſſociation.

To take cognizance of cauſes omitted or neglected in particular Congregations, and to receive appeals from them.

To diſpence cenſures in caſes within their cognizance, by Admonition, Suſpenſion, or Excommunication.

To admoniſh or further to cenſure ſcandalous Miniſters whether in Life or Doctrine, according to the nature of the offence, and that not only for ſuch offences, for which any other Member of the Congregation ſhall incur any cenſure of the Church (in which caſe he is to be cenſured by the Claſſis with the like cenſure for the like offence) but likewiſe particularly for Symony, entering into any Miniſteriall charge, without allowance of authority, falſe Doctrine, affected lightneſſe and vanity in Preaching,

wilfull neglect of Preaching, or ſlight performance of it, wilfull Non-reſidence from his Charge without call or cauſe approved by the Claſſis, neglect of adminiſtration of the Sacraments, or other Miniſteriall duties required of him in the Directory of Worſhip, depraving and ſpeaking reproachfully againſt the wholeſome orders by authority ſetled in the Church, caſting reproach upon the power of Godlineſſe, which he by his office ought chiefly to promote. Yet ſo as that no Miniſter be depoſed, but by the reſolution of a Synode.

To examine, ordain, and admit Miniſters for the Congregations reſpectively therein aſſociated, according to the advice formerly ſent up to the Honourable Houſes of Parliament.

Of Synodicall Aſſemblies.

SYnodicall Aſſemblies do conſiſt of Paſtors, Teachers, Church-Governours, and other fit Perſons (when it ſhall be deemed expedient) where they have a lawfull calling thereunto.

Theſe Aſſemblies have Eccleſiaſticall power and authority to judge and determine controverſies of Faith and caſes of Conſcience according to the Word.

They may alſo lawfully excommunicate and diſpence other Church cenſures.

Synodicall Aſſemblies are of ſeverall ſorts, *viz.* Provinciall, Nationall, Oecumenicall.

Of Provinciall Aſſemblies.

LEt Provinciall Aſſemblies generally be bounded according to the civill diviſion of the Kingdome, into Counties: and where any very great Counties are divided within themſelves, let the Provinciall Aſſemblies follow theſe diviſions, as in the Ridings of *Yorkſhire.*

Provinciall Aſſemblies conſiſt of Delegats ſent from ſeverall Claſſes within that Province; whoſe number ſhall exceed the number of any one Claſſicall Presbytery within that Province: And to that end, there ſhall be at the leaſt two Miniſters, and two ruling Elders out of every Claſſis, and where it ſhall appear neceſſary to encreaſe the number, let it not exceed ſix of each from any one Claſſis

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Let theſe Aſſemblies meet twice every year: And for enabling them unto any act of Government, let there be a major part at leaſt of the Miniſters delegated from the ſeverall Claſſes.

Of the Nationall Aſſembly.

THe Nationall Aſſembly conſiſts of Miniſters and Ruling Elders delegated from each Provinciall Aſſembly. The number of which delegats ſhall be three Miniſters, and three Ruling Elders out of every Province, and five Learned and Godly Perſons from each Univerſity.

Let this Aſſembly meet once every year, and oftner if there ſhall be cauſe.

The firſt time to be appointed by the Honourable Houſes of Parliament.

Of the ſubordination of theſe Aſſemblies.

IT is lawfull and agreeable to the Word of God, that there be a ſubordination of Congregationall, Claſſicall, Provinciall, and Nationall Aſſemblies for the Government of the Church, that ſo appeals may be made from the inferiour to the ſuperiour reſpectively.

The Provinciall and Nationall Aſſemblies, are to have the ſame power in all points of Government and cenſures, brovght before them within their ſeverall bounds reſpectively, as is before expreſſed to belong to Claſſicall Presbyteries within their ſeverall aſſociations.

The Directory *for Church cenſures.*

CHurch cenſures and Diſcipline, for judging and removing of offences, being of great uſe and neceſſity in the Church, that the name of God, by reaſon of ungodly and wicked perſons living in the Church be not blaſphemed, nor his wrath provoked againſt his people; that the Godly be not leavened with, but preſerved from the contagion, and ſtricken with fear; and that the ſinners

who are to be cenſured, may be ſhamed, to the deſtruction of the fleſh, and ſaving of the Spirit in the day of the Lord Jeſus; We judge this courſe of proceeding therein to be requiſite.

The order of proceeding with offenders who before excommunication manifeſt Repentance.

WHen the offence is private, the order of admonition preſcribed by our Lord, *Mat.* 18. 15. is in all wiſedome and love to be obſerved, that the offender may either be recovered by Repentance; Or, if he adde obſtinacie or contempt to his fault, he may be but off by Excommunication.

If the ſinne be publikely ſcandalous, and the ſinner being examined, be judged to have the ſignes of unfeigned Repentance, and nothing juſtly objected againſt it, when made known to the people, let him be admitted to publike confeſſion of his ſinne, and manfeſtation of his Repentance before the Congregation.

When the penitent is brought before the Congregation, the Miniſter is to declare his ſinne, whereby hehath provoked Gods wrath, and offended his People, his confeſſion of it, and profeſſion of unfeigned Repentance for it, and of his reſolution (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) to ſinne no more, and his deſire of their Prayers for mercy, and grace to be kept from falling again into that or any the like ſinne: Of all which the penitent alſo is to make a full and free expreſſion, according to his ability.

Which being done, the Miniſter, after prayer to God for the penitent, is to admoniſh him to walk circumſpectly, and the people to make a right uſe of his fall, and riſing again; and ſo, to declare that the congregation reſteth ſatisfied.

The order of proceeding to Excommunication.

EXcommunication being a ſhutting out of a Perſon from the Communion of the Church (and therefore the greateſt and laſt cenſure of the Church) ought not to be inflicted without great and mature deliberation, nor till all other good meanes have been aſſayed.

Such errors as ſubvert the Faith, or any other errors which overthrow the power of Godlineſſe, if the party who holds them, ſpread them, ſeeking to draw others after him; and ſuch ſinnes

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in practiſe, as cauſe the Name and Truth of God to be blaſphemed, and cannot ſtand with the power of Godlineſſe, and ſuch practiſes as in their own nature manifeſtly ſubvert that Order, Unity, and Peace, which Chriſt hath eſtabliſhed in his Church; Thoſe being publikely known, to the juſt ſcandall of the Church, the ſentence of Excommunication ſhall proceed according to the Directory.

But the perſons who hold other errours in judgement about points wherein learned and godly men poſſibly may, or do differ, and which ſubvert not the Faith, nor are deſtructive to godlineſſe; Or that be guilty of ſuch ſinnes of infirmity, as are commonly found in the children of God; Or, being otherwiſe found in the Faith, and holy in life (and ſo not falling under cenſure by the former Rules) endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and do yet out of conſcience not come up to the obſervation of all thoſe rules, which are or ſhall be eſtabliſhed by Authority for regulating the outward Worſhip of God, and Government of his Church, we do not diſcerne to be ſuch againſt whom the ſentence of Excommunication for theſe cauſes ſhould be denounced.

When the ſinne becomes publike and juſtly ſcandalous, the offender is to be dealt withall by the Elderſhip, to bring him to Repentance, and to ſuch a manifeſtation thereof, as that his Repentance may be publike as the ſcandall: But if he remaine obſtinate, he is at laſt to be excommunicated, and in the meane time to be ſuſpended from the Lords Supper.

And whereas there be divers and various judgements touching the power of Excommunication, and the proper ſubject thereof, we conceive that for clearing of difficulties, avoiding of offences, preſervation of peace, and ſuch like, theſe following Directions are fit to be obſerved.

In the great and difficult caſes of Excommunication, whether concerning doctrine or converſation, the Claſſicall Presbytery upon the knowledge thereof, may examine the perſon, conſider the nature of the offence, with the aggravations thereof: and as they ſhall ſee juſt cauſe, may declare and diſcerne that he is to be excommunicated, which ſhall be done by the Elderſhip of that Congregation whereof he is a member, with the conſent of the Congregation, in this or the like manner.

As there ſhall be cauſe, ſeverall publick admonitions ſhall be

 given

given to the offender (if he appear) and prayers made for him.

When the offence is so hainous that it cryes to Heaven for vengeance, wasteth the conscience, and is generally scandalous, the censures of the church may proceed with more expedition.

In the admonitions, let the fact be charged upon the offender, with the cleare evidence of the guilt thereof; Then let the nature of his sinne, the particular aggravations of it, the punishments and curses threatned against it, the danger of impenitency, especially after such meanes used, the wofull condition of them cast out from the favour of God and communion of the Saints, the great mercy of God in Christ to the penitent, how ready and willing Christ is to forgive, and the Church to accept him upon his serious repentance; Let these or the like particulars be urged upon him, out of some suitable places of the holy Scriptures.

The same particulars may be mentioned in Prayer, wherein the Lord is to be intreated to blesse this admonition to him, and to affect his heart with the consideration of these things, thereby to bring him unto true repentance.

If upon the last admonition and prayer there be no evidence nor signe of his repentance, let the dreadfull sentence of Excommunication be pronounced, with calling upon the name of God, in these or the like expressions.

Speak this in the third Person, if the party be absent.

Whereas thou N. *hast been by sufficient proofe convicted of (here mention the Sin) and, after due admonition and prayer remainest obstinate, without any evidence or signe of true repentance; Therefore, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and before this Congregation, I pronounce and declare thee* N. *excommunicated, and shut out from communion of the faithfull.*

Let the prayer accompanying Sentence be to this effect.

That God who hath appointed this terrible Sentence for removing of offences, and reducing of obstinate sinners, would be present with this his ordinance, to make it effectuall to all these holy ends, for which he hath appointed it, that this retaining of the offenders sinne, and shutting him out of the Church, may fill him with feare and shame, and break his obstinate heart, and be a means to destroy the flesh, and to recover him from the power of the devill, that his spirit may yet be saved, that others also may be stricken with feare, and not dare to sinne so presumptuously

ſumptuouſly, and that all ſuch corrupt leaven being purged out of the Church (which is the houſe of God) Jeſus Chriſt may delight to dwell in the midſt of them.

After the denunciation of this Sentence, the people are to be warned, that they hold him to be caſt out of the communion of the Church, and to ſhun all communion with him. Nevertheleſſe, Excommunication diſſolveth not the bonds of civill or naturall relations, nor exempt from the duties belonging to them.

This ſentence is likewiſe to be made known, not only to that, but to any other Claſſis or Congregation, as occaſion ſhall require, by reaſon of his abode or converſing with them.

The order of proceeding to Abſolution.

IF after excommunication, the ſignes of repentance appear in the excommunicated perſon, ſuch as godly ſorrow for ſin, as having thereby incurred Gods heavy diſpleaſure, occaſioned griefe to his brethren, and juſtly provoked them to caſt him out of their communion; together with a full purpoſe of heart to turne from his ſin unto God, and to reforme what hath been amiſſe in him; with an humble deſire of recovering his peace with God and his people, and to be reſtored to the light of Gods countenance, and the communion of the Church; he is of be brought before the Congregation, and there alſo to make free confeſſion of his ſin, with ſorrow for it, to call upon God for mercy in Chriſt, to ſeek to be reſtored to the communion of the Church; promiſing to God new obedience, and to them more holy and circumſpect walking as becometh the Goſpell: He is to be pronounced in the Name of Chriſt abſolved and free from the cenſures of the Church, and declared to have right to all the Ordinances of Chriſt, with praiſing of God for his Grace, and Prayer that he may be fully accepted to his favour, and heare joy and gladneſſe, to this effect.

To praiſe God who delighteth not in the death of a ſinner, but that he may repent and live, for bleſſing the Ordinance of Excommunication, and making it effectuall by his Spirit, to the recovering of this offender; To magnifie the mercy of God through Jeſus Chriſt in pardoning and receiving to his favour, the moſt grievous offenders, whenſoever they unfainedly repent and forſake their ſinnes.

To pray for aſſurance of mercy and forgiveneſſe to this Penitent, and ſo to bleſſe his Ordinance of Abſolution, that he may finde himſelf looſed

thereby; and that the Lord would henceforth so uphold and strengthen him by his Spirit, that being found in the faith, and holy in all manner of Conversation, God may be honoured, the Church edified, and himself saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Then shall follow the sentence of Absolution, in these or the like words.

Whereas thou N. *hast for thy sinne been shut out from the Communion of the faithfull, and hast now manifested thy repentance, wherein the Church resteth satisfied, In the Name of Jesus Christ, before this Congregation, I pronounce and declare thee absolved from the sentence of Excommunication formerly denounced against thee, and do receive thee to the Communion of the Church, and the free use of all the Ordinances of Christ, that thou mayest be partakers of all his benefits to thy eternall salvation.*

After this Sentence of Absolution, the Minister speaketh to him as to a Brother, exhorting him to watch and pray, or comforting him, if there be need, the elders embrace him, and the whole Congregation holdeth communion with him as one of their own.

Although it be the duty of Pastors and other ruling officers to use all diligence and vigilancy both by Doctrine and Discipline respectively for the preventing and purging out such Errors, Heresies, Schismes, and scandals, as tend to the detriment and disturbance of the Church: Yet because it may fall out through the pride and stubbornnesse of offenders, that these meanes alone will not be effectuall to that purpose; It is therefore necessary, after all this to implore the aid of the Civill Magistrate, who ought to use his coercive power for the suppressing of all such offences, and vindicating the discipline of the Church from contempt.

Of Ordination of Ministers.

BEcause no man ought to take upon him the office of a Minister of the Word without a lawfull Call, therefore, Ordination which is the solemne setting apart of a person, unto some publike Church office, is alwaies to be continued in the Church.

When he who is to be ordained Minister, hath been first duely examined touching his fitnesse, both for life and Ministeriall abilities, according to the rules of the Apostle, by those who are to ordaine

ordaine him, and hath been by them approved; He is then to be ordained by impoſition of hands and prayer with faſting. But if any perſon be found unfit, he is not to be ordained.

It is agreeable to the Word and very expedient, that ſuch as are to be ordained Miniſters be deſigned to ſome particular Church, or other Miniſteriall charge.

Ordination is the act of a Presbyterie unto which the power of ordering the whole worke belongs; yet ſo as that the preaching Presbyters orderly aſſociated either in Cities, or in neighbouring villages, are thoſe to whom the impoſition of hands doth appertain, for thoſe Congregations within their bounds reſpectively. And therefore it is very requiſite that no ſingle Congregation which can conveniently aſſociate, do aſſume to it ſelf all and ſole power in Ordination.

No perſon or perſons may or ought to nominate, appoint, or chuſe any man to be a Miniſter for a Congregation, who is not fit and able for that worke: And if any unfit man be nominated to the Claſſicall Presbytery, they are to refuſe to admit him.

When any Miniſter is to be ordained for a particular Congregation, or tranſlated from one place to another, the people of that Congregation to which he is to be ordained or admitted, ſhall have notice of it, and if they ſhew juſt cauſe of exception againſt him, he is not to be ordained or admitted. And in the meane time till one be admitted, the Presbytery ſhall provide for the ſupply of the Congregation.

The Congregation, if they conceive themſelves wronged by any act of the Presbytery, ſhall have liberty to appeal to the next Synod, which upon hearing of the matter, ſhall judge as the cauſe ſhall require.

The Directory for Ordination of Miniſters.

IT being manifeſt by the Word of God that no man ought to take upon him the office of a Miniſter of the Goſpell untill he be lawfully called and ordained thereunto, and that the work of Ordination is to be performed with all due care, wiſdome, gravity, and ſolemnity; we humbly tender theſe Directions as requiſite to be obſerved.

He that is to be ordained, being either nominated by the people, or otherwiſe commended to the Presbytery for any place, muſt

addresse himselfe to the Presbytery, and bring with him a testimoniall of his taking the Covenant of the three Kingdoms, of his diligence and proficiency in his Studies, what degrees he hath taken in the University, and what hath been the time of his abode there, and withall of his age, which is to be foure and twenty yeares, but especially of his life and coversation.

2 Which being considered by the Presbyterie, they are to proceed to enquire touching the Grace of God in him, and whether he be of such holinesse of life as is requisite in a Minister of the Gospel: And to examine him touching his learning and sufficiency: and touching the evidences of his calling to the holy Ministery, and in particular his fair and direct calling to that place.

The Rules for examination are these.

1 *That the party be dealt with in a brotherly way, with mildnesse of spirit, and with speciall respect to the gravity, modesty, and quality of every one.*

2 *He shall be examined touching his skill in the Originall tongues, and the tryall to be made by reading the* Hebrew *and* Greek *Testaments, and rendring some portion of them into* Latine; *and if he be defective in them, enquiry shall be made the more strictly after his other learning, and whether he hath skill in* Logick *and* Philosophy.

3 *What Authors in* Divinity *he hath read, and is best acquainted with; And tryall shall be made of his knowledge in the chief grounds of Religion, and of his ability to defend the Orthodox Doctrine contained in them, against all unsound and erronious opinions, especially those of the present age: of his skill in the sence and meaning of such places of Scripture as shall be proposed to him, in cases of Conscience, in the Chronologie of Scripture, and the Ecclesiasticall History.*

4 *If he hath not preached in publike, with approbation of such as are able to judge, he shall at a competent time assigned him, expound before the Presbitery such a place of Scripture as shall be given him.*

5 *He shall also within a competent time, frame a discourse in Latine, upon such a Common place or Controversie in Divinity as shall be assigned him, and exhibite to the Presbyterie such Theses as expresse the summe thereof, and maintain a Dispute upon them.*

6 *He shall Preach before the People, the Presbyterie or some of the Ministers of the Word appointed by them, being present.*

7 *The proportion of his gifts in relation to the place unto which he is called, shall be considered.* 8 *Beside*

8 Beſide the triall of his gifts in Preaching, he ſhall undergoe an examination in the premiſſes two ſeverall dayes or more, if the Presbyterie ſhall judge it neceſſary.

9 And as for him that hath been formerly ordained a Miniſter, and is to be removed to another charge, he ſhall bring a Teſtimoniall of his Ordination, and of his abilities and converſation, whereupon his fitneſſe for that place ſhall be tryed by his Preaching there, and (if it ſhall be judged neceſſary) by a further examination of him.

3 In all which he being approved, he is to be ſent to the Church where he is to ſerve, there to Preach three ſeverall dayes, and to converſe with the people, that they may have triall of his gifts for their edification, and may have time and occaſion to inquire into, and the better to know his life and converſation.

4 In the laſt of theſe three dayes appointed for the triall of his gifts in Preaching, there ſhall be ſent from the Presbitery to the Congregation a publike intimation in writing, which ſhall be publikely read before the people, and after affixed to the Church door, To ſignifie that ſuch a day a competent number of the Members of that Congregation nominated by themſelves, ſhall appeare before the Presbyterie, to give their conſent and approbation to ſuch a man to be their Miniſter: Or otherwiſe to put in with all Chriſtian diſcretion and meekneſſe, what exceptions they have againſt him. And if upon the day appointed, there be no juſt exception againſt him, but the people give their conſent, then the Presbyterie ſhall proceed to Ordination.

5 Upon the day appointed for Ordination, which is to be performed in that Church where he that is to be ordained is to ſerve. A ſolemne faſt ſhall be kept by the Congregation, that they may the more earneſtly joyne in prayer for a bleſſing upon the ordinance of Chriſt, and the labours of his Servants for their good. The Presbyterie ſhall come to the place, or at leaſt three or foure Miniſters of the Word ſhall be ſent thither from the Presbyterie, of which one appointed by the Presbyterie, ſhall Preach to the people concerning the office and duty of the Miniſters of Chriſt, and how the people ought to receive them for their works ſake.

6 After the Sermon, the Miniſter who hath Preached, ſhall in the face of the Congregation demand of him who is now to be ordained concerning his faith in Chriſt Jeſus, and his perſwaſion of the Truth of the Reformed Religion according to the Scripture;

ture; his ſincere intentions and ends in deſiring to enter into this Calling; his diligence in Praying, Reading, Meditation, Preaching, miniſtring the Sacraments, Diſcipline, and doing all other Miniſteriall duties toward his charge; his zeal and faithfulneſſe in maintaining the Truth of the Goſpel, and Unity of the Church againſt Errour and Schiſme; his care that himſelfe and his Family may be unblameable and examples to the flock; his willingneſſe and humility in meekneſſe of Spirit to ſubmit unto the admonitions of his Brethren and Diſcipline of the Church, and his reſolution to continue in his duty againſt all troubles and perſecution.

7 In all which having declared himſelf, profeſſed his willingneſſe, and promiſed his endeavours by the help of God. The Miniſter likewiſe ſhall demand of the people concerning their willingneſſe to receive and acknowledge him as the Miniſter of Chriſt, and to obey and ſubmit unto him, as having rule over them in the Lord, and to maintaine, encourage, and aſſiſt him in all the parts of his office.

8 Which being mutually promiſed by the people, the Presbytery, or the Miniſters ſent from them for Ordination, ſhall ſolemnly ſet him apart to the Office and Work of the Miniſtry, by laying their hands on him, which is to be accompanied with a ſhort Prayer, or Bleſſing to this effect.

Thankfully acknowledging the great mercy of God, in ſending Jeſus Chriſt for the Redemption of his People, and for his aſcention to the right hand of the Father, and thence pouring out his Spirit, and giving gifts to Men, Apoſtles, Evangeliſts, Prophets, Paſtors, and Teachers, for the gathering and building up of his Church, and for fitting and enclining this man to this great Work; To entreat him to fill him with his holy Spirit, to give him (whom in his Name we thus ſet apart to this holy Service) to fulfill the Work of his Miniſtry in all things, that he may both ſave himſelfe and the People committed to his charge.

9 This or the like forme of Prayer or Bleſſing being ended, let the Miniſter who Preached, briefly exhort him to conſider the greatneſſe of his Office and Work, the danger of negligence both to himſelfe and his people, the Bleſſing which will accompany his faithfulneſſe in this life and that to come; And withall exhort the People to carry themſelves to him as to their Miniſter in the

the Lord according to their ſolemne promiſe made before. And ſo by prayer both commending Him and his Flock to the grace of God. After the ſinging of a Pſalme, let the Aſſembly be diſmiſſed with a Bleſſing.

10 If a Miniſter be deſigned to a Congregation, who hath been formerly ordained Presbyter according to the forme of Ordination which hath been in the Church of *England*, which we hold for ſubſtance to be valid, and not to be diſclaimed by any who have received it; Then there being a cautious proceeding in matter of examination, let him be admitted without any new Ordination.

11 And in caſe any perſon already ordained Miniſter in *Scotland*, or in any reformed Church, be deſigned to a Congregation in *England*, he is to bring from that Church to the Presbytery here, within which that Congregation is, a ſufficient Teſtimoniall of his Ordination, of his life and converſation while he lived with them, and of the cauſes of his removall; and to undergoe ſuch a triall of his fitneſſe and ſufficiency; And to have the ſame courſe held with him in other particulars, as is ſet downe in the rule immediatly going before touching examination & admiſſion.

12 That Records be carefully kept in the ſeverall Presbyteries of the Names of the perſons Ordained with their Teſtimonials, the time and place of their Ordination, of the Presbyters who did impoſe hands upon them, and of the charge to which they are appointed,

13 That no Money or gift of what kinde ſoever ſhall be received from the perſon to be ordained, or from any on his behalfe for Ordination, or ought elſe belonging to it, by any of the Preſbytery, or any appertaining to any of them, upon what pretence ſoever.

Thus far the ordinary rules and courſe of Ordination in the ordinary way. That which concernes the extraordinary way, requiſite to be now practiſed, followeth:

1 In theſe preſent exigencies, while we cannot have any Presbyteries formed up to their whole power and worke, and that many Miniſters are to be ordained for the Service of the Armies and Navie, and to many Congregations where there is no Miniſter at all, and where (by reaſon of the publike troubles) the people cannot either themſelves enquire out and finde one, who may be a faithfull Miniſter for them, or have any with ſafety ſent unto them

them for such a solemn tryall as was before mentioned in the ordinary rules, especially when there can be no Presbytery neere unto them, to whom they may addresse themselves, or which may come or send to them a fit man to be ordained in that Congregation, and for that people. And yet notwithstanding it is requisite that Ministers be ordained for them, by some who being set apart themselves for the worke of the Ministry; have power to joyne in the setting apart of others who are found fit and worthy: In these cases, untill by Gods blessing the aforesaid difficulties may be in some good measure removed, let some godly Ministers in or about the City of *London*, be designed by publike authority, who being associated may ordaine Ministers for the City, and the Vicinity, keeping as neere to the ordinary rules forementioned as possibly they may. And let this association be for no other intent or purpose, but onely for the worke of Ordination.

2 Let the like association be made by the same authority in great Towns and the neighbouring Parishes in the severall Counties, which are at the present quiet and undisturbed, to doe the like for the parts adjacent.

3 Let such as are chosen or appointed for the service of the Armies or Navie be ordained as aboveſaid by the associated Ministers of *London*, or some others in the Countries.

4 Let them do the like when any man shall duly and lawfully be recommended to them for the Ministry of any Congregation, who cannot enjoy liberty to have a tryall of his parts and abilities, and desire the help of such Ministers so associated for the better furnishing of them with a Person, as by them shall be judged fit for the service of that Church and people.

Cornelius Burges Prolocutor, pro tempore,
Henry Roborough, Scrib.
Adoniram Byfield, Scrib.

FINIS.